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If you believe you are eligible to vote and encounter difficulty registering, please contact the Elections Division of the Georgia Secretary of State:

Office of the Secretary of State  
Elections Division  
Suite 1104 West Tower  
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive  
Atlanta, GA 30334-1505  
(404) 656-2871 (voice)  
(404) 651-9531 (fax)

If the Georgia Secretary of State is unable to help you, or to report a problem, contact:

U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Voting Section, Rm. 7254 - NWB  
Washington, D.C. 20530  
(202) 307-2767 (voice)  
(800) 253-3931 (toll-free)  
(202) 307-3961 (fax)  
[www.usdoj.gov/crt](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt)

*This pamphlet is provided for informational purposes only, as an aid to further inquiry. The laws in many states are revised frequently, and may have changed since this pamphlet was issued. It is your responsibility to determine whether you are lawfully eligible to vote, and criminal penalties can result from voting when ineligible or making false statements on a registration form.*

Issued December, 2000

U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division



# Restoring Your Right to Vote



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The right to vote is an important civil right in a democracy as well as a civic responsibility, and yet many persons who have been convicted of a crime do not know whether they are eligible to vote. For both federal and state elections, the right to vote is controlled by the law of the state in which you live. Some states restrict the right to vote for persons who have been convicted of a crime. This pamphlet is intended to help you determine whether you are eligible to vote in the state in which you live, and if so, what steps you must take to be permitted to vote.

### **What law governs whether my felony conviction limits my right to vote?**

The impact of a criminal conviction on the right to vote varies widely from state to state. Whether you can vote after being convicted of a crime is determined by the state in which you live, not the state in which you were convicted.

### **Can I vote while I'm incarcerated in Georgia?**

If you are a resident of Georgia, you may not vote while you are incarcerated as a result of a felony conviction. If you are a resident of another state who is temporarily incarcerated in Georgia, you may be able to vote by absentee ballot in your home state. You need to consult the law of your home state regarding both criminal convictions and absentee ballots to see if this is a possibility.

### **I have been released from incarceration. How do I restore my right to vote?**

In Georgia, the right to vote is automatically restored upon satisfactory completion of imprisonment, probation and parole. Upon final discharge of all aspects of your sentence, your right to vote is automatically restored, and you can register to vote.

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### **What if my conviction was for a federal crime?**

Georgia applies the same rules whether you were convicted of a federal or a state crime.

### **What if I was convicted in another state?**

The same rules apply for Georgia voters even if the conviction occurred in another state.

### **What happens if I move to another state?**

If you move to another state, your right to vote will be controlled by the laws of that state.

### **What are Georgia's other voter registration requirements?**

To vote in Georgia, you must be

- A citizen of the United States
- A legal resident of Georgia and of the county in which you wish to vote
- At least 18 years of age by Election Day

You also must not be judicially determined to be mentally incompetent.

### **When do I need to register to vote?**

The deadline for registration is usually the fifth Monday prior to an election date.

### **Where do I go to register?**

Mail-in registration forms are available at your County Board of Registrars office as well as many public libraries, public assistance offices, recruitment offices, schools and other government offices.

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You can also register to vote when you are receiving services at Department of Public Safety driver's license posts. "Motor Voter" registration is offered when you renew or apply for your driver's license. Registration may also be available at other state service agencies. Contact the County Board of Registrars office near you to find out which service agencies provide voter registration.

You may also e-mail your request for a voter registration form to: [sosweb@sos.state.ga.us](mailto:sosweb@sos.state.ga.us)